

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2020

The Honorable Rickey "R.D." James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310

Dear Assistant Secretary James,

We write today urging swift consideration of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) contract with the state of Georgia regarding water storage in Lake Lanier. This contract – which could benefit Forsyth and Gwinnett Counties as well as the City of Gainesville – has been in the negotiation process for many years and it is past time that the Corps take steps to finalize it.

As you may know, contract negotiations have been ongoing between the Corps and the State of Georgia for over a decade. In 2011, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit ruled that the Corps has the right to allocate waters from Lake Lanier to Atlanta, Georgia. Despite this ruling and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that demonstrated such a contract would not harm Florida, the contract with Georgia has yet to be finalized. As the days and months go on, Georgia counties planning their water usage are unable to follow through with their plans and, unfortunately, these counties will continue to reckon with their inability to plan and predict their water usage from Lake Lanier until the sought-after contract is fully considered.

In 2016, the most recent EIS concerning Lake Lanier's water supply demonstrated that the Corps' contract with Georgia would not harm the environment or Florida. Now, four years later, this contract is still being stalled and the states of Alabama and Florida are working to see that it never comes to fruition. In fact, the state of Alabama is capitalizing on the delay and requesting a new EIS. If Alabama's request is fulfilled by the Corps, this already decade-long quest for a contract would be unnecessarily prolonged.

We urge the Corps to rely on the standing 2016 EIS and the 2011 ruling of the Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit to complete negotiations regarding the Georgia contract in a timely manner. Additionally, we request a response detailing the anticipated timeline for the Corps' decision regarding the Georgia contract no later than July 31, 2020.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Doug Collins
Member of Congress



Rob Woodall
Member of Congress